

WASHINGTON, DC – Today, Rep. Pete Stark, Ranking Democrat on the Ways and Means Health Subcommittee, expressed outrage over CMS Administrator Scully's refusal to allow the CMS Actuary to release information he has requested that provides important analysis of the House Republican Medicare prescription drug plan.

"It is outrageous that CMS Administrator Tom Scully is threatening a longtime public servant with being fired for simply doing his job. The Actuary has always been a non-partisan, professional source of information for Congress with regard to Medicare. Apparently, that no longer holds true," said Rep. Stark.

"Last night, Tom Scully told my staff that CMS Actuary Rick Foster would 'be fired so fast his head would spin' if he released this information to us," said Rep. Stark.

"All we're asking for is an analysis of how the Republican's plan to privatize Medicare will affect Part B premiums and the level of subsidies that will be provided to private plans in comparison to traditional Medicare. The CMS Actuary did a similar memo for us in February of 2000 that showed that the Part B premiums would increase by 47%," continued Rep. Stark.

Concluded Rep. Stark, "If that calculation still holds, the Republican plan would increase Part B premiums to approximately \$106.20 and add at least another \$35 in a drug premium. Seniors would be paying at least \$142 a month. Is that a weapon of mass destruction for America's seniors that this Administration is trying to hide?"